'Italianness' in English-language novels: intratextual translation as representational tool

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Abstract

A contemporary writer choosing to set a narrative in a different country might find themselves desirous to represent multilingualism (or 'heterolingualism,' the term preferred by Rainier Grutman[1]) on the page. Bringing a different language into the main language of the text, however, can be a complicated process. Using terminology introduced by Meir Sternberg in 1981, this article looks at three examples of contemporary British novels set partly in Italy: Virginia Baily's *Early One Morning*, Adam Foulds's *In the Wolf's Mouth* and Penelope Fitzgerald's *Innocence*. Particular attention will be paid to the different ways in which the narratives integrate Italian language into their English text, and to the different purposes served by intratextual translation strategies, before pointing out some of the limits of intratextual translation as a representational tool.

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In the twenty-first century, travel and migration have become common phenomena, and it is not surprising that authors might consider including different languages in their fiction in order to reflect a multicultural world – despite what Delabastita and Grutman call 'the unwritten rule of monolingualism in the literary realm'.[2] Since Leonard Forster's study of multilingualism in literature, *The Poet's Tongues* (1970), the attention paid to fictional

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[1] Rainier Grutman defines heterolingualism as 'the textualization of foreign idioms as well as varieties (social, regional, historical) of the authorial tongue' ('Effets hétérolingues dans le roman québécois du XIXe siècle,' in *Littérature*, 101 (1996), p. 40, my translation).

[2] Delabastita, Dirk and Rainier Grutman, 'Introduction: fictional representations of multilingualism and translation,' *Linguistica Antverpiensia,* 4 (2005), p. 11.

multilingualism, or heterolingualism, has increased, and is often discussed in relation to translation: the aforementioned Delabastita and Grutman devoted in 2005 an issue of *Linguistica Antverpiensia* to the topic of 'Fictional representations of multilingualism and translation'.[3] In her book *Multilingualism in Modernist Fiction*, Juliette Taylor-Batty also examines the representation of languages and the use of intratextual translation in the works of authors such as Jean Rhys, James Joyce, and Samuel Beckett. Borrowing Taylor-Batty's use of Meir Sternberg's terminology, drawn from his 1981 article 'Polylingualism as Reality and Translation as Mimesis,'[4] this article will use textual analysis to offer close readings of three English-language texts set in Italy: Adam Foulds's *In the Wolf's Mouth,* Penelope Fitzgerald's *Innocence*, and Virginia Baily's *Early One Morning*. I will focus on the ways in which the Italian language is incorporated into the text using methods of intratextual translation, and on the impact that narrative themes and aims might have on the writer's choices.

1) Translation and Terminology

'Literary art,' Meir Sternberg writes, 'finds itself confronted by a formidable mimetic challenge: how to represent the reality of polylingual discourse through a communicative medium which is normally unilingual.' In his article, Sternberg provides, in the words of Juliette Taylor-Batty, 'a useful categorisation of the ways in which fiction can represent linguistic diversity,'[5] detailing a variety of strategies that an author might use when bringing a different language into the dominant language of the text.

The first strategy, vehicular matching, is the reproduction of foreign speech on the page, exactly as it happens in the fictional world: if a character launches into a tirade in Italian, for example, an author using vehicular matching would reproduce the full tirade on the page.

The second strategy, selective reproduction, differs only from vehicular matching in that the writer might choose to include some, but not all, of the foreign speech on the page. If we continue with our Italian tirade example, this might result in including perhaps a sentence or two, and then summarising the rest of the character's speech.

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[3] Delabastita, Dirk and Rainier Grutman, eds., 'Fictional representations of multilingualism and translation,' *Linguistica Antverpiensia,* 4 (2005).

[4] Meir Sternberg, 'Polylingualism as Reality and Translation as Mimesis,' *Poetics Today*, 2 (1981), 221-239.

[5] Juliette Taylor-Batty, *Multilingualism in Modernist Fiction* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 41.

Moving away from reproducing foreign speech on the page, the third strategy, verbal transposition, involves suggesting through the main language of the narration that an utterance was made in a different tongue, using, for example, irregular grammar or strange word order, in order to evoke foreignness. If a writer wanted to suggest that an utterance was made in French, they might have the character say, 'This man stole the bag of that lady,' rather than 'that lady's bag,' to reflect the difference between possessives in the two languages.

The fourth strategy, 'conceptual reflection,' suggests foreignness not through the language itself, but through the frame of reference, which indicates a different culture. Sternberg uses the example of *Gulliver's Travels*: the Lilliputian people are unacquainted with the concept of a watch, and therefore describe Gulliver's watch in a long periphrasis.[6]

Lastly, the fifth strategy, 'explicit attribution,' is the use of a speech tag, such as 'she said in Italian' – the last step before homogenization, in which the author does not differentiate between separate languages.

The difference between homogenization and the other strategies proposed by Sternberg, Taylor-Batty points out, is that '[these forms of translational mimesis] explicitly signal the polylingual nature of the scene and/or characters that they are depicting.'[7] Rather than allowing the reader to ignore the polylingual nature of the story, they show a desire on the author's part to represent 'otherness', to convey a sense of difference in language and culture.

If we compare Sternberg's article with more recent works on translational tools, such as Michael Cronin's book *Translation and Globalization*, the approaches that Cronin suggests for a 'travel writer […] faced with the fact of interlingual communication' show similarities with Sternberg's strategies.[8] 'Mimesis' is the reproduction of foreign speech on the page, equivalent to Sternberg's vehicular matching; 'defamiliarization' is the use of isolated words in the narrative, creating lexical exoticism, like Sternberg's selective reproduction. 'Periphrasis,' which consists of expressing through indirect speech what is said in a foreign language, is not mentioned by Sternberg, and can therefore be added to the strategies mentioned above, which will be referred to when looking at the texts in the second part of this article.[9]

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[6] Meir Sternberg, 'Polylingualism as Reality and Translation as Mimesis,' pp. 225, 227, 230, 231.
[7] Taylor-Batty, *Multilingualism in Modern Fiction*, p. 41.
[8] Michael Cronin, *Translation and Globalization* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 159.
[9] Ibid.

Before moving away from the topic of translation, I want to touch briefly on the distinction made by Cronin and other translators between two translational approaches: 'naturalising' (also called domestication or normalisation) and 'exoticizing' (also called foreignising). When Venuti establishes the difference between the two in *The Translator's Invisibility*, he quotes German theologian and philosopher Friedrich Schleiermacher who, according to him,

> allowed the translator to choose between a domesticating practice, an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to receiving cultural values, bringing the author back home, and a foreignizing practice, an ethnodeviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad.[10]

The three novels that will be considered in the next section use, to some extent, an exoticizing approach, since the authors could have chosen to write in English with no trace of the 'original' Italian; but as we will see, the degree of exoticism and translational strategies vary depending on the novel.

2) Intratextual Translation in Context

The novels in this section were selected because of their different representations of Italian (and in some cases, of other languages). Adam Foulds's war novel, *In the Wolf's Mouth,* uses Sicily as one of the theatres for World War II, where internal and external conflicts happen in parallel. In Virginia Baily's *Early One Morning,* Italy is in part a setting that is 'other' and enables the protagonist to reflect on her life; the narrative also explores questions of identity and consequences. Lastly, Italy is the setting for most of Penelope Fitzgerald's novel, *Innocence*, which opposes two conflicting worldviews and approaches to life.

a) *In the Wolf's Mouth*

The title of Foulds's novel reflects his approach to language. Foulds includes few Italian words in the discourse language[11], ensuring that the novel is perfectly readable for an

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[10] Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 15.
[11] In fact, the only Italian word I could find was on page 169, when one of the Italo-American soldiers says, ''Ooh, mamma […]. We're here. The boys are here.''

English-only speaker – but he also employs a process halfway between verbal transposition and conceptual reflection, using the literal translations of Italian expressions and phrases. *In the Wolf's Mouth* is a translation of the Italian phrase for 'good luck,' *in bocca al lupo.* For the non-Italian speaker, the title simply suggests a place of danger, closer perhaps to the meaning of the matching French phrase, *la gueule du loup* (a trap). In this way, although Foulds's title conveys further meaning for the Italian or the French speaker, it also makes sense for the intended English-speaking audience. The slight strangeness of the phrase might even induce a reader with no language skills to look up the wording.

Foulds's technique appears more strikingly in the following excerpt, taken from the prologue, set in Sicily in 1926:

> Angilù put his hands to the side of his mouth and sang, 'Who's singing over there? Sounds like a sick dog.' There was a pause, then Gino's voice drifted back. 'Who's that singing up there? You sound like you've got toothache in every tooth.'
> For a while they sang insults.
> 'You know nothing about singing. You'd better go and learn at school in Palermo.'
> 'You don't know how to sing. You need to go to school in Monreale.'
> 'When you were born behind a door I thought you were a stillborn dog.'
> 'When you were born in the middle of the street there was a terrible stink of shit.'[12]

While these insults are written in grammatically correct English, they are clearly not native to the language. 'Toothache in every tooth' sounds odd because of the repetition of 'tooth,' which a native speaker might have tried to avoid; this is also true of the 'born behind a door/stillborn dog' line. The absence of speech tags helps the reader notice these strange turns of phrase. The insults and their being sung – a rather surprising fact – are powerful in creating a sense of place and otherness.

Explicit attribution is used at various points in the narrative, sometimes to denote a difference between actual Italian and Sicilian dialect, as is the case here: 'The tall man said, in good Italian, 'He isn't here?' Angilù answered, as he had to, in Sicilian. 'No one answered'' (p. 17). The use of 'as he had to' suggests a difference in class and status; Angilù, despite being a shepherd, is able to speak Italian (as becomes apparent later in the novel), but

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[12] Adam Foulds, *In the Wolf's Mouth* (London: Vintage, 2015), p. 5. Further references to this edition will be given in the body of the text.

in this context he chooses not to. Explicit attribution also denotes the difference, in the second section of *In the Wolf's Mouth*, between English and Italian, when Cirò, a Mafioso who has returned to Sicily after a twenty-year absence, acts as a translator for the American soldiers (p. 175, 228), and when Italo-American soldier Ray communicates with the locals or reads inscriptions on 'posters of Mussolini' (p. 178, 217). Cirò takes advantage of his privileged position as a speaker of Sicilian, Italian and English, re-establishing his position as a man of influence in the town, even in front of the Allies: 'Albanese said something to him in Italian and the two men exchanged words too rapidly for Will to understand […]. Afterwards, Albanese said in English. 'We are going to work great together. Greco here understands me […]'' (p. 228). This episode illustrates Sabine Strümper-Krobb's assertion that translation 'is a 'weapon', because it generates knowledge and insight and is able to secure a favourable position for those who control it'.[13]

In a conversation between former shepherd Angilù and British officer Will Walker, once the Allies control the Sicilian town, Walker welcomes Angilù at the town hall:

> 'Good morning, can I help you at all? If it's the medical officers you're after I'm afraid they won't be here for a day or two.'
> Angilù answered in Italian. 'Do you not speak Italian? I don't speak English and I'm not going to be able to make you understand anything if you can't speak Italian.'
> 'I'm afraid you'll have to speak a good deal slower than that if I'm going to understand you.'
> 'I said, do you speak Italian? I need to talk about my house and the old landlord. I should have got the Prince to come with me.'
> 'Did you say "Prince"? There is a local prince, isn't there? Look, stay here, and I'll get someone who can help. I can read a newspaper perfectly well, but you don't sound like what I'm reading. Stay here.' (p. 237)

The limits of explicit attribution are obvious here. We know that Angilù is speaking in Italian, but we have to guess which language Walker is answering in; the line about speaking slower may be in Italian, since Angilù repeats his question. However, the fact that the dialogue is written in idiomatic English makes it unclear for the reader why they are struggling to communicate. Our attention is drawn to the fact that Angilù's speech is being 'translated' by Foulds from its original Italian, but the reader is given no sense of what the

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[13] Sabine Strümper-Krobb, 'The Translator in Fiction,' *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 3 (2003), p. 120.

words might have sounded like. While discussing the English translation of the German novel *The Magic Mountain*, Kate Briggs brings up a similar issue: as a reader, she is made to notice, because of the novel's multilingualism, that she is reading a translation, a story which originally happened in a different language:

> This is the belief-suspension that reading a translation requires: even when all logics point to the characters speaking, acting and interacting, to the prose having been written, the feelings and ideas having been articulated, in German (the story of an unassuming young man making his way, in midsummer, from his native city of Hamburg to Davos-Platz), here it all is in English, and here I am being invited – expected? – to go with it.[14]

The 'belief-suspension' Briggs writes about is also required, I would argue, of readers engaging with a novel written in English, but set in a different place – in the case of my novel, Italy – and following native characters who would not, in the fictional world of the novel, speak English.

Verbal transposition occurs only rarely in *In the Wolf's Mouth*. It appears when the American soldiers come into contact with the Sicilian population: 'Sicilian men slapped their chests and declared, 'My cousin – Chicago!' Or 'America best! Is best!'' (p. 216). The other episode sees Ray, whose friend was just killed by a mine, taking shelter in the local aristocrat's house and interacting with his daughter, Luisa. This is a section of their dialogue:

> 'You are American soldier.'
> 'That's right.'
> 'You are young.'
> […]
> 'There is a place,' she said. 'Do you speak French? French is better.'
> 'I don't speak no French. Are you French?'
> 'You put blood everywhere,' she said. 'The servant will want to know. But it is fine.' (p. 223)

Luisa speaks not only Italian and English, but also French (better than English, apparently, although in their interaction her English seems satisfactory). Her only mistake is forgetting the pronoun before 'American soldier'; the use of full verbal forms ('it is fine' rather than

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[14] Kate Briggs, *This Little Art* (London: Fitzcarraldo Editions, 2017), p. 23.

'it's fine') also denotes awkwardness. In a later exchange, she tells Ray, 'I go now' (p. 257), a common tense error for Italian speakers of English, since Italian does not have an equivalent to the English present continuous. Once Luisa finds out that Ray understands Italian, they agree that she will use Italian when she doesn't know a word in English (p. 241) – but since their dialogue is presented in English, the reader is left to guess what language she might be using, and her mistakes are very few. Jane Hodson discusses this type of inconsistent representation in *Dialect in Film and Literature*, pointing out that writers might choose to represent characters 'using a lot of dialectal features to begin with,' and 'once the basic principle of their dialect has been established, the density with which it is marked diminishes'.[15] This, she argues, is caused in part by 'reader resistance,' as the representation of dialect – or, in our case, of non-native English – on the page might irritate the reader, and present the undesirable effect of making the character seem less intelligent.

Overall, Foulds's use of conceptual reflection, explicit attribution, and occasionally verbal transposition conveys a sense of place and otherness, despite his decision not to include any Italian within the text of *In the Wolf's Mouth*. However, as the interaction between Walker and Angilù shows, the consistent use of English in the novel sometimes requires greater suspension of disbelief on the reader's part. The story of the novel is one of cyclical, senseless violence, and of a failure of understanding (the Allies' inability to grasp the complex workings of the Sicilian society and the Mafia lead to Angilù's death). Perhaps Foulds's decision to retain English as the only language of the text is a way of prefacing the end of the novel, showing that the dominant language, spoken by the Allies, will not accept compromise or difference.

b) *Innocence*

Although *Innocence* is set largely in Florence, its universe has a cosmopolitan feel. Chiara Ridolfi's mother was American; Chiara's aunt Maddalena was for a time married to an Englishman; Chiara herself was educated in England, has an English best friend, and can 'spell incorrectly in four languages'.[16] Perhaps for this reason, Fitzgerald inserts Italian words into the narrative without signalling them – she doesn't use italics, a common way of signalling the appearance of a language different to that of the main body of the text – and

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[15] Jane Hodson, *Dialect in Film and Literature* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 110.
[16] Penelope Fitzgerald, *Innocence* (London: Fourth Estate, 2013), p. 239. Further references to this edition will be given in the body of the text.

there are no footnotes. The same happens with French when Chiara's father is addressed, at a party, by a French author:

> 'Tell me, que font les jeunes?'
>
> 'I'm afraid I haven't asked them what they're doing.'
>
> 'Do they still think of me, Pierre Aulard, as young?' (p. 154)

The context helps the reader work out some of the meaning: even if they don't know that 'les jeunes' means 'the young' in French, the reply involves what someone is doing. The presence of 'young' in the next question is another clue. Nevertheless, Fitzgerald's choice not to use italics might seem surprising and confusing for the reader. On one occasion, italics *are* used, but to signal a quote from a different source, rather than a difference in language: '"It wouldn't make any difference how often. Do you remember "*amor segnoreggio la anima, la quale fu si tosto a lui disponata*"?'' (p. 162). Chiara, talking to her best friend Barney about her soon-to-be husband, Salvatore, references a quotation that we must assume is linked to the education they received together. The presence of the word 'amor' at the start suggests it is something to do with love, but in the absence of further context or a footnote, only by researching the quote might the reader find out that Chiara is (mis) quoting from Dante's *La Vita Nuova*. Including such a sentence – in fourteenth-century Italian, difficult to decipher even for a reader fluent in contemporary Italian – may be a way of suggesting the depth of the education that Chiara and Barney shared, the length of time spent together at the convent. It is also, perhaps, a reminder of Chiara's Italianness.

The next two examples, which I would like to set against one another, are taken from the narration. In the first one, Salvatore's colleague, Gentilini, pauses at the entrance of the Ricordanza, the country mansion owned by Chiara's family. There is an inscription above the doors, readable 'in part':

> Maggior dolore è ben la Ricordanza –
>
> senti' dire di lor con sì alti sospiri –
>
> o nell' amaro inferno amena stanza? (p. 91)

In keeping with the rest of the novel, Fitzgerald provides no information to help the reader derive some meaning from the inscription. We get a description of the house through Gentilini's eyes, and a glimpse of Salvatore, whom his colleague is ashamed to see skulking around the area; then the narrative moves on. In another episode, Salvatore, having travelled

back to his hometown in order to sell his share of the family land, visits an abandoned factory:

> An inscription in painted lettering, MUSSOLINI IS THE MAN WHOM NEITHER GOD NOR MAN WILL BEND could still just be made out on one of the inner walls at the entrance to the workers' recreation room. (p. 165)

There is no reason why this inscription – painted, we assume, during the rise of Fascism, a regime that exalted Italy's national unity and strength – would appear in English in its original context; the narrator, therefore, must be translating it for us. Why did Fitzgerald choose to reproduce the inscription from the Ricordanza in its 'original' Italian, but to translate the one in the factory? In both situations, the man reading the inscription is Italian, with presumably little understanding of English. Perhaps the decision reflects the struggle between old and new that underpins the novel. The Ricordanza's inscription is much older than the factory's: in the opening chapter, set in the sixteenth century, the Ridolfi's ancestors are already living in the mansion. The Mussolini inscription, on the other hand, dates back to the early 1930s. While the Ricordanza belongs to the distant Italian past, to a time when the boundaries between countries were perhaps not so blurred, so elastic, the inscription about Mussolini belongs to a closer time period, where phenomena like colonisation and a world war have already happened. The two inscriptions could be treated differently because one belongs to the old world, linked to the Ridolfi family, and the other to the new, represented by Salvatore and Barney. Another reason might be that the second inscription holds more weight in the narrative, and Fitzgerald wants to ensure that her English-only readers will understand it: indeed, 'the man whom neither God nor Man will bend' might well apply to Salvatore, whose inflexibility offers a stark contrast to Chiara's 'tendency to fragment […] into other existences' (p. 82).

Overall, the dialogue in *Innocence* does not contain as much Italian as one might expect, considering most of the novel takes place in Italy. Conversations between Chiara and her cousin Cesare, for example, are related to the reader in English.[17] Only at the end of the novel, when Chiara phones Cesare to ask him if he knows where Salvatore is, does Italian appear in one of their exchanges: ''[…] I'm just asking you what to do, *come sempre*'' (p. 238, my italics).

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[17] They have a conversation in idiomatic English from p. 137 to p. 141, and a further interaction from p. 274 to p. 279, when Chiara and Barney go to the farm. Similarly, the conversation between Cesare and Salvatore, from p. 330 from p. 339, would likely be taking place in Italian, but is reported in English.

Italian also erupts into the English text when the wife of Salvatore's colleague, Signora Gentilini, faints at Chiara and Salvatore's wedding. Barney and Cesare rescue her:

> As she scrambled upright Signora Gentilini opened her eyes, with their large yellowish whites, and said:
>
> 'Non so capacitarmi… mi vergogno…'
>
> 'What's she ashamed of?' asked Barney.
>
> 'She wants to recover,' Cesare said.
>
> 'You mean that she's afraid of embarrassing her husband. You mean he hardly ever takes her out with him in public and she's afraid that if she screws it all up and calls attention to herself she'll never be allowed out again. […]'
>
> Cesare did not deny this.
>
> […] Signora Gentilini sat up, and clinging to Cesare's arm began to talk in a rapid, broken manner. (pp. 227-228)

The exchange between Barney and Cesare makes it clear what Signora Gentilini is saying, regardless of the reader's competency in Italian. The rest of Signora Gentilini's 'broken' speech is reported as 'periphrasis,' in Michael Cronin's words – indirect speech – through Cesare's point of view, as a long sentence that stretches over eight lines: 'Anyone would think that she was not used to going out, not used to company, but the fact was that she hadn't eaten or drunk anything although everybody had pressed her…' (p. 228). This enables the reader to follow Signora Gentilini's monologue (giving them an advantage on Barney, who understands it only 'in part'), and to realise that Barney's interpretation is, on the whole, accurate.

As Julian Barnes points out in his introduction, '*Innocence* is constructed around and through a number of masterly scenes, usually between two people, in which minor to major misunderstandings occur […]'.[18] Miscommunications, or failures of understanding, are an important theme in Fitzgerald's novel, and this is reflected in some of the occurrences when Italian appears in the text, or when attention is drawn to language. Consider, for example, this section where Barney calls Chiara 'weedy':

> At this damning word, of which she didn't know the Italian equivalent, Chiara hung her head. She accepted it absolutely. To be weedy, as she understood it, is to be alien, not to grow in the right place, but at the same time to lack stoutness and self-

reliance. She knew her tendency to fragment, often against her will, into other existences. (p. 82)

Though Chiara does not know the Italian translation of 'weedy,' she has developed her own understanding of the word, merging the two definitions given by the OED: 'of the nature of or resembling a weed', but also 'lacking strength of character; spineless, weak-willed.' This difficulty – or perhaps impossibility – of translation is something that also appears in the narrative, most strikingly when Barney comes back to Italy in order to tell Cesare that she loves him. Chiara, unsure of the venture's success, tries to understand where Barney's feelings originated:

> 'What did he do at the wedding?' Chiara called out. 'What did he say?'
> Barney answered over her shoulder. 'He said, "Brava Lavinia."'
> 'Was that all?'
> 'How would you translate that into English?'
> 'I don't think you could.' (p. 276-7)

Barney's love for Cesare is rooted in those words that cannot, or will not, translate well into English. What the words convey – approval, a sense of admiration – is considerable for quiet, even-tempered Cesare, and yet somewhere on its trajectory from enunciator to receiver, this expression of admiration took on a meaning of romantic love that was not intended.

Because the world represented in Fitzgerald is multi-cultural and multi-lingual, her choice not to differentiate stylistically between languages – in the narration or the dialogue – is understandable. Chiara, who '[spells] incorrectly in four languages,' is unlikely to make a distinction between these languages, unless a difficulty of translation arises; therefore the text does not draw a line between Italian, French, or English, instead including them fluidly into a multilingual narrative.

c) *Early One Morning*

In *Early One Morning*, a novel split between two timelines – one unfolding in Italy during WWII, and the second set in 1973, geographically split between Italy and Wales – Virginia Baily has two approaches to representing elements of the Italian language and culture. In the wartime sections, where all the characters are Italian, less attention is drawn to language. Baily creates a sense of place using street names, landmarks, celebrities of the time, and

family names, which she keeps in Italian ('Babbo' for 'Dad,' 'Nonna' for 'Grandma')[19]. Her way of formatting Chiara's address on her identity papers – 'Via dei Cappellari 147' – is suggestive of Sternberg's conceptual reflection in its difference from the English model, creating a sense of unfamiliarity and otherness for the reader through a reference to a different system. On occasion, when Italian words appear in the narrative, Baily offers a smooth translation through Chiara, as in the case of this briefly glimpsed character: '[Chiara] doesn't know her real name but everyone calls her Nonna Torta – which might mean Granny Pie or Granny Wrong; both epithets would suit' (p. 7). In those wartime sections, when Italian family names are used in dialogue, they are not italicised: ''Mamma,' he screams and Chiara snatches him up' (p. 21). This seems deliberate and justified: although the word 'Mamma' is Italian, and different from the English-language text, it belongs to the characters' native language, and would not be singled out by them.

In the 1973 timeline, the situation is different. The plot revolves around teenager Maria finding out about her Italian father, getting in contact with, and visiting Chiara in Rome (Maria's father is the boy Chiara saved during the war). With the arrival of Welsh Maria, language is brought to attention in a different way: the conversations between Maria and Chiara, conducted part in English and part in Italian, bring up issues of translatability, (mis)communication, and false friends. Chiara's English speech when she addresses Maria uses verbal transposition, with sentence structure and word choices often reflecting the Italian 'original.' The common confusion between simple present and present continuous, seen in Foulds's work, is also used by Baily, in examples such as 'I write in reply to your letter' (p. 30), or 'Maria, I go out one minute' (p. 283). In this last line of dialogue, the use of 'one' rather than 'a' is another indication that Chiara's thought process is happening in Italian (where *una* is the translation of both 'one' and 'a'). Occasionally she also uses words of a high register: 'renounce' (p. 118) is close to the Italian *rinunciare* and is not immediately understood by Maria, because it is not commonly used in conversational English.

Language, in this section of the narrative, is not fixed but rather fluctuating; it changes depending on the state of the speaker, and it occasionally produces unexpected meanings. On the day of Maria and Chiara's first meeting, Chiara's English is affected by an accident that has occurred in the morning (a car caught her ankle as she stepped off the curb). This is

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[19] Examples include, but are not limited to, 'Via dei Cappellari' (p. 1), 'the statue of Bruno Giordano' (p. 3), the 'new favourite matinée idol, Gino Bechi' (p. 5), 'the view of the tower of San Lorenzo from the window' (p. 6), 'her Olivetti typewriter' (p. 41), and 'Nonna's house' (p. 63). All page numbers are taken from Virginia Baily, *Early One Morning* (London: Fleet, 2016). Further references to this edition will be given in the body of the text.

illustrated in the dialogue by Chiara confusing the words 'accident' and incident,' and by her frustration when she fails to find her words (p. 271). In the short section retracing the love story between Maria's mother and Daniele, language even becomes superfluous: 'They knew only a few words of each other's languages. Mostly, they bypassed words' (p. 95). Despite this, Baily chooses to show in one instance the language Daniele is speaking, providing the translation afterwards: ''*Corri*,' he said. Run' (p. 95).

Early One Morning is a narrative interested in language learning. On the train to Rome, Maria attempts to communicate with an Italian family, but the language – which she had thought 'would rise up once she was in Italy' – fails her, with only the one inappropriate sentence coming to her mind (''Do you have that handbag in another colour?'', p. 241). This situation is no doubt familiar to any language learner, the shortcomings of phrases learned in a book becoming apparent when the learner encounters native speakers. Maria's language learning justifies, on a few occasions, the apparition of Italian language in the English text, as is the case here: 'She had practiced her Italian on that cat. *Ciao, bella. Come stai? Mi chiamo Maria*' (p. 86). Identity is an important theme in the novel, and Maria, upon learning that she is half-Welsh, half-Italian, decides to go looking for this 'Italianness,' seeking out the part of herself that has just been unveiled.[20] In the same way that identity can be split, multiple, language can also be porous, as suggested by this comment, made by Maria's mother: ''Precious' was one of those words that could be said in an Italian way with a roll of the R and an O on the end, and it was the same, more or less. *Prezioso*' (p. 95).

Baily's use of translational mimesis serves not only to create a realistic sense of Chiara's Italianness, but also to draw attention to the challenges of communication, and the pitfalls of language learning. In a serpentine conversation, Maria's question about a hat owned by Chiara leads to a discussion about mushrooms, and to the eventual realisation that *porcini* does not seem to have a translation in English,[21] highlighting the failures of language itself, and its rootedness in geography and local history. The consistent use of verbal transposition in Chiara's speech, throughout the 1970s timeline, is Baily's way of showing that despite Chiara's command of English, her thought process is still happening in Italian.

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[20] Baily uses the word 'Italianness' in a passage when Maria, having just arrived in Rome, is selecting clothes to wear on her first day: 'Everything looked too hot and too British. None of it expressed how she was now, her burgeoning Italianness' (p. 284).

[21] *Early One Morning*, p. 314-5. Chiara theorises that perhaps porcini 'do not grow in Wales.'

Conclusion

When looking at these three novels, we can see that the classification of intratextual translation strategies provided by Sternberg applies to contemporary texts, and constitutes a useful tool for analysis. As Sternberg suggested, the range of techniques within the frame of translational mimesis is used differently depending on a narrative's themes and aims.[22] Adam Foulds focuses on the way language can be used to manipulate and influence people, and only hints at the presence of Italian through the medium of English; Fitzgerald and Baily are both interested in the failures of language as a means of communication, and use Italian (and, in Fitzgerald's case, French) in their texts to draw attention to the polylingual reality of the narrative world. On several occasions, the texts point out the impossibility of translation; while languages can be porous and near transparent, the gaps between the cultures they represent cannot always be bridged. While these authors often refuse to provide translations of the Italian words and phrases in their texts, they tend to ensure – Fitzgerald being the notable exception – that context or periphrasis will make the text intelligible to their readers. Reed Way Dasenbrock suggests, however, that there is a difference between intelligibility and meaningfulness, and writes that to 'make [a text] unintelligible is not to make it unmeaningful; the use of opaque foreign words can be part of a deliberate artistic strategy'.[23]

Both Dasenbrock and Hodson point out that the question of the reader, of the resistance that the reader might offer to the presence of dialect or non-English language on the page, is one that authors have to consider when choosing to include dialect or a foreign language into their narration. While we saw the limits of explicit attribution in the dialogue written by Foulds between Sicilian Angilù and British Will Walker, the alternative – including entire sentences in Italian when Angilù is talking – must have been deemed by Foulds as too great a risk of losing his reader. While the use of translational mimesis in Foulds's, Fitzgerald's and Baily's work shows an awareness of, and a desire to go against what Tessa Dwyer calls '[Hollywood's] usual tendency to ignore or deny issues of language difference',[24] concerns about readership and publication may play a part in limiting the representation of polylingualism in literature.

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[22] Sternberg, p. 236.

[23] Reed Way Dasenbrock, 'Intelligibility and Meaningfulness in Multicultural Literature in English,' *PMLA,* 102 (1987), p. 15.

[24] Tessa Dwyer, 'Universally Speaking: *Lost in Translation* and polyglot cinema,' *Linguistica Antverpiensia,* 4 (2005), p. 297.

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